

**Chris O'Brien**

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**From:** Erich Haslehurst <erich@statecraftstrategies.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 7, 2024 3:26 PM  
**To:** House Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Written testimony in support of H8149

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Nicholas Sulham. I have worked as a teacher in East Providence for nearly a decade, and I am currently an East Providence resident. I made the decision to become a teacher as a freshman in high school. Like many, I had some very influential teachers. These people worked incredibly hard, and cared deeply about their craft. This pushed me in the direction of teaching, but there were other factors as well.

I quickly learned that while my teachers were not wealthy monetarily, they were rich in their personal lives, and felt great joy in what they achieved with their students. I also learned that my teachers were able to enjoy a comfortable retirement after decades of hard work. This made going into the profession a much easier decision. Unfortunately, the retirement situation for teachers changed while I was in college. It soon became clear that I was going to have to work harder and smarter in order to retire at an age that was in line with the rest of the working world.

Now that I am in the profession, I see what my older colleagues are facing as they reach the age of retirement. It is not good. It does not give me hope. A common conversation among teachers is about when each of us will be able to retire. This conversation has become depressing because we all realize we may not be able to retire, or that we may have to get another job after we retire.

What is the point in retiring if you have to get another job? By the time I am able to retire, I will have been in a classroom for 40 years. I frequently see a very well regarded, brilliant retired teacher. I see him working customer service at the local grocery

store because what he gets for retirement is not enough. Many others have to go back to subbing on a regular basis to make ends meet. Is this really how we treat those that are so influential in our lives? Do we not deserve the opportunity to retire with dignity and comfort after so many decades of service to the public?

Sincerely,

Nick Sulham  
East Providence